Name: Rafid Saadman

Rafid’s Personal Counselling Notes

Table of Content

Counselling Approaches **4**
People Judgement Criteria **6**
The Empathic Mind Model **6**
Humanistic Therapy **7**
Pre-Assumptions of Person-Centered Therapy by **10**
Carl Rogers **10**
My Core Beliefs **12**
Psychology of Self **13**
How to Build a Therapeutic Relationship **14**
Freud's View of The Human Mind **15**
Defence Mechanisms **16**
Sigmund Freud **16**
Roadblocks to Listening **18**
LCB Model for Understanding People **21**
By Larry Crabb **21**
Exercise: Difference between Death and Life **23**
Exercise: LCB Model **23**
Summary of LCB Model **24**
Theories of Counselling & Schools of Thought **25**
The Philosophy of Dialogue 25
By Martin Buber 25
Humanistic School 26
By Carl Rogers 26
Humanistic School 27
By Abraham Maslow 27
Psychoanalytical School 28
By Eric Berne 28
Phenomenology **29**
Achology: The Cycle of Change **30**
General Awareness **31**
Ontology: The Source of Human Identity **32**
Behaviorism **32**
Cognitive Behavioral **33**
Thoughts Are Not Facts **34**
Thomas Harris Life Positions Theory **35**
The Cognitive Experience **35**
Cognitive Distortions **36**

Pre-neurotic to Neurotic **37**
Counselling Stages **37**
Relationship Building 38
Counselling Rules **40**
Counselling Questions to Ask Clients **40**
References **42**

Counselling Approaches

1. Psychodynamic Approach:

- This approach is rooted in the work of Sigmund Freud. It's all about diving deep into the unconscious mind and understanding how early childhood experiences, especially with parents, shape who we are.
- Freud believed that hidden feelings, unresolved conflicts, and even our dreams hold clues about what's going on beneath the surface. Sexual and aggressive instincts often play a big role here.
- Therapists help by exploring these unconscious patterns, sometimes through techniques like talking freely about thoughts (free association) or analyzing dreams.
- The goal? To bring these hidden issues to light so we can deal with them and move forward.

2. Humanistic Approach:

- The humanistic approach feels much more optimistic. Think of Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, who believed we're all naturally driven to grow and become our best selves.
- This method puts a big emphasis on creating a safe, non-judgmental space where the client feels understood and accepted—what Rogers called Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR).
- The counsellor's role is more of a guide than a fixer. They're there to listen deeply, show empathy, and encourage clients to trust their own instincts and abilities.
- It's less about digging into the past and more about helping clients find clarity and confidence in the present.

3. Behavioral Approach:

- If you've ever heard about Pavlov's dogs or Skinner's box, you're already familiar with the behavioral approach. It's all about how behaviors are learned—and unlearned—through experience.
- For example, classical conditioning is when we associate two things (like a bell ringing and food, which made Pavlov's dogs salivate). Operant conditioning, on the other hand, focuses on rewards and punishments to shape behavior.

- This approach doesn't dwell on thoughts or feelings—it's very action-oriented. If a behavior isn't working, the goal is to replace it with a better one using tools like reinforcement or gradual exposure.

4. Cognitive Behavioral Approach (CBT)

- CBT is like connecting the dots between your thoughts, feelings, and actions. It's practical and focused on the here and now.
- The idea is that our thoughts influence how we feel, which then affects what we do. For example, if you're constantly thinking, "I'll fail," it's likely to lead to anxiety and avoidance behaviors.
- Counsellors help you identify these negative patterns and replace them with healthier ways of thinking. They also work on actions, like practicing new habits or facing fears gradually.
- CBT is a great choice if you're looking for tools to handle challenges and make meaningful changes in your life.

5. Integrative Approach

- This approach is kind of like mixing and matching—pulling the best tools from different counselling methods to suit the unique needs of the person seeking help.
- For example, a counsellor might use techniques from CBT to tackle negative thinking but also incorporate a humanistic style to create a warm, supportive space.
- The beauty of the integrative approach is its flexibility—it's all about meeting clients where they're at and finding what works best for them.
- It's a more personalized way of helping people, focusing on the whole person rather than sticking to one strict method.
- Each approach has its strengths, and counsellors often choose or combine them based on what feels right for the client and their situation.

People Judgement Criteria

Based on Surface:
Music Taste, Celebration, Language/Accent, Religion etc.

Shallow:
Body language, Eye Contact, Attitude, Patience, Cleanliness etc.

Deep: (This is what we try to figure out as Counsellors)
Self Worth, Self Concept, Reasons for Attitude, Definition of Obscenity

- We don't like being judged based on our preferences.
- We shouldn't judge others for their choices.
- We develop trust by being consistent.
- Ask WHY questions.
- Be curious to learn about different types of people.
- Try to understand the root of the problem.
- The problem arises from a belief.
- The belief is placed in a person's heart due to his environment, culture and thought process.

The Empathic Mind Model

Rational People:

- Always tries to prove a person wrong using logic.
- A logical approach to life.
- Life revolves around facts and rationality.
- Base future plans on personal experiences and statistics.
- Focused.
- They seek to know a different perspective from their counsellors.

Emotional People:

- Always use their feelings to trump the other person's feelings.
- Reactive and Impulsive.
- Decisions made based on feelings.
- Transparent.
- Rational thinking is difficult.
- Most of the counselling clients belong to this group.
- They seek to make their negative emotions disappear.
- Some people also seek to manage their emotions better.

Empathic People:

- Intuitive
- Discerning
- Aware
- Balanced
- Wise (When making a decision, look at stats and facts, but also look at how we feel)
- Self-aware

Benefits of having an Empathic Mind:

- A more peaceful and pleasurable experience of life.
- Increased capacity to identify, understand, and tame self-sabotaging beliefs, thoughts, feelings, and habits.
- Eliminating destructive thought patterns that fuel discontentment and suffering in life.
- Increased capacity to tolerate painful life events.
- Ongoing effective emotional management (especially during times of extreme crisis and challenge).
- Emotional intelligence and emotional resiliency.

Humanistic Therapy

Given Physical Needs: (Simple)

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.
- Food, Water, Shelter, Clothing, Warmth

- Physiological Needs
- Simple and straightforward

Given Emotional Needs: (Complex)

- Security:
    - Deriving validation from within.
    - Knowing we are enough for ourselves and nobody else can make us more than who we are.
    - People who don't have self-security need validation from somewhere else.
    - Making peace with who we are and who we aren't.
    - If we are not secure in who we are, it will damage the relationships we build.

- Attention:
    - A need to give and receive attention.

- Autonomy:
    - Being in control of our own lives.
    - Having control over staying or leaving a situation.
    - The more we feel in control, the freer we feel.
- Intimacy:
    - Being fully accepted by at least one person.
    - People sometimes get so obsessed with their lives that they forget to build meaningful relationships.
- Community:
    - Working for something greater than SELF.
- Privacy:
    - Being able to contemplate alone.
    - Use time and space.
- Status:
    - Knowing yourself in relation to others.
- Competence:
    - Having value through expertise.
    - Chasing perfection is good, but hoping to reach it is unrealistic.

Instill these qualities in yourself first. Then help others to better understand these concepts.

- Meaning and Purpose:

    - Viktor Frankl: Man's search for meaning. (Book Recommendation)
    - Human beings hope there is a meaning to life.
    - Existential crisis: Search for meaning.
    - Counsellors usually work with people dealing with existential crises.
    - Human beings value themselves based on their past experiences.
    - We assign value to ourselves based on our interactions with others (acceptance and rejection).
    - What doesn't kill you in life makes you stronger.
    - Share stories and experiences with other people to give them hope and guidance.
    - Share a secondary perspective to give people the opportunity to draw an empowering meaning.
    - If we don't have empathy for people, it is going to be difficult to help them.
    - Making peace with the past and understanding our own life experiences.
    - Help people make better sense of the past so that they can prepare for a more purposeful future.

- Our Past and Present:
    - Instead of blaming ourselves for a difficult relationship with our parents, we can try to understand that they might be carrying unhealed trauma from their own past — and that pain may be the source of their anger.
    - If a person defines us as something that we hate to be, we react emotionally.
    - We need to try to understand how our past experiences impact our present life.
    - Understanding that no one else has the power to take anything from us or add to what we are.

How to Understand People:

- Is the person aiming to feel better or become better?
- To feel fulfilled as a counsellor, we should work with people who are looking to become better.
- Counsellors sow seeds in people.
- If they have an intention to be better, the seed will become a beautiful plant.

    - Some clients just want to vent and want to counsellor to agree with them.
    - Some clients are open to receiving feedback, but they don't change their behaviours and patterns.
    - Some clients have heavily limited beliefs, which will weigh them down. The new ideas suggested by the counsellors are not strong enough to fight against their beliefs.
    - Some clients want to change and put effort to do so. They want guidance and clarity on how to fill in the blanks of life.
- Hurt people hurt people, but people can also heal each other's past traumatic wounds.
- To build trust with the clients, we need to have empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence (Actions and feelings are aligned).

Pre-Assumptions of Person-Centered Therapy by Carl Rogers

- Being better is better than feeling better.
    - Feeling good about a bad activity is not a good thing.
    - Being better takes acceptance of bad qualities within us, accountability, and a sense of responsibility.
    - Emotions play just 1 role in experiencing life.
    - We experience life in 5 ways:
        - Physically
        - Emotionally
        - Spiritually

        - Rationally
        - Volitionally

- Focus Impacts Feelings
    - What we focus on in life has a direct impact on what emotions we feel.
    - Minor modifications in our thinking can bring major changes in our feelings.
    - Focusing on things we can control can bring us more peace.

- People have good intentions but Bad Habits
    - Separate a person's behaviour, actions, and attitudes from themselves.
    - Instead of placing a judgment that a person is a “Bad person”, our job is to understand that person’s actions and why they do it.
    - It can be frustrating for people who are willing to do good but are held back because of their bad habits. We should put ourselves in their shoes and understand their frustration.
    - If we expect people to treat us with mercy and grace, we should also do the same for other people.
    - People make mistakes all the time.

- Personal responsibility Nurtures Empowerment
    - Feeling in control gives more power to people.
    - If an individual believes we are in control of their actions and behaviours, we can start making the necessary changes.
    - The more results we see, the more empowered we feel.
    - Feeling out of control weakens a person.
    - It is only when we start putting in the effort to change for the better, we will feel empowered

- Humanity is a product of Nature and Nurture
    - Some schools of thought in psychology only believe in one.
    - Believing in both is a more grey way of thinking instead of believing in the black(Nature) or white(Nurture).
    - Our nature is our biological composition.
    - Nurture is how our external environment affects us.
    - Both nature and nurture are in play. However, we are still in control of our limbs and thinking patterns. It’s only a matter of practice.

- All people have to ability to move forward

- Before starting to move forward, we must wholeheartedly believe that we can move forward.
- Without believing in the notion of moving forward, it is difficult to do so.
- We should take it easy on ourselves; removing bad habits and replacing them with good ones takes time.
- The journey of learning and becoming better is a lifelong experience.
- Our limiting beliefs, which are holding us back, are not universal truths. They can be changed.

My Core Beliefs

1. Do you feel like a victim?

Answer: No, I feel like people who play victim all the time, even though they are blessed in life, might be weak at the core. I empathize with them and want to help them come out of this mentality.

2. Is there something wrong with me?

Answer: Yes, I don't believe I am perfect. There are certain habits that I have that I want to get rid of.

3. Are there things wrong with other people?

Answer: Hard to say from a general perspective. I don't like generalizing. However, in my experience, I think a lot people are inconsiderate of other's feelings. I think they do it out of habit, they don't really mean to hurt people.

4. Do you feel like you're good enough?

Answer: I would say I am in the middle. Thinking of myself as "good enough" might make me arrogant.

5. Do you think you deserve the best in life?

Answer: It's hard to say what I deserve. I am less focused on the results and more focused on the efforts that I can put into things myself.

However, if I get the best things in life, I feel grateful. And I usually don't settle for less.

6. Do you hate being controlled?

Answer: Yes. Very much. I want to be able to do things myself without much reliance on people or the environment.

However, I do understand that I am dependent on them up to a certain extent. I just don't want to be overly dependent.

7. Is the world an evil place?

Answer: I believe people are good in general.

8. Are you able to handle rejection?

Answer: Yes, I have faced rejection a few times in my life, which made it easy for me to accept rejection now.

9. Are you okay with failing?

Answer: Yes, however, I do tend to blame myself after the failure, which motivates me to do even better the next time.

10. Do you believe that what you see is the way things are?

Answer: No, I believe I am wrong about a lot of things, and I am open to learning and growing.

Psychology of Self

- Self-esteem: What we feel about ourselves. I is an individual's evaluation of themselves.
    - We are in a constant state of self-evaluation.
    - It is about how we feel about where we are.

- Self-concept: Who they actually are or their real self
    - Without vision, an individual perishes.
    - Having a clear vision and pursuing it helps people feel alive.
    - Our job as a counsellors is to help people actualize their goals.
    - It is about where we are going in the future.

- Self-worth: What value we put on ourselves.
    - Do we deserve good in life?
    - Are we inferior, superior, or just another human being?

- Self-awareness: Realizing what kind of traits we display. We have to be honest when we judge ourselves.
    - We have to realize what we feel inside and acknowledge it.
    - Self-awareness is realizing our patterns.

- Self-knowledge: Learning to grow in a positive direction after realizing our patterns.
    - Pride and arrogance are when people think they already know something. Self-knowledge only comes when we see ourselves as imperfect.
    - Self-knowledge can be applied in 5 sections: Physical, Emotional, Rational, Volitional, and Spiritual.

- Self-belief: What we think about ourselves.
    - For example, thinking about ourselves as smart, angry, stupid, etc.

How to Build a Therapeutic Relationship

1. Availability:
    a. It refers to mental availability, not time availability.
    b. Being able to come to a client with the whole of ourselves.
    c. We should clear our minds.
    d. We should put aside our concerns while dealing with our clients.
    e. Being right here, right now.

2. Awareness:
    a. We have to be aware of how we deal with people.
    b. If we have negative qualities, we should try to sort them.
    c. If we have positive qualities, we should make them even better.

3. Openness:
    a. How open are we in acknowledging our flaws?
    b. Disclosing yourself when needed for relating to another person.

4. Receptiveness:
    a. How receptive are we to considering other world views?
    b. How willing are we to change?
    c. Commitment to change is receptiveness.
    d. Counsellors can't make the change, the client will have to do it themselves.
    e. It will have to be goal-oriented.
    f. Decide to change —> Have a vision about future self —> Actions to move forward.

5. Attentiveness:
    a. Full undivided attention.
    b. How are we emotionally reacting to the client's stories?

6. Appreciation:
    a. Appreciation of the truth.
    b. Understand that our clients appreciate us.
    c. Always think about clients in a positive light.

Freud's View of The Human Mind

- Conscious Mind: Thought, Perception
    - Awareness of what we are wearing, listening, and focusing on the present experiences.
    - Stays at the front of our mind.

- Subconscious Mind: Memories, Stored Knowledge
    - Ego (Reality): The ego develops when children are young and operates on what is real. The ego attempts to satisfy the id's desires in a realistic

manner that is socially acceptable. Regulates the drives of the id to suit the demands of reality.

    - ID (Instincts): The id is the primitive, unconscious part of the personality that operates on the pleasure principle.

    - Superego (Morality): The superego emerges around ages 3-5 and represents the internalized moral standards and ideals of society. It acts as a conscience, judging and evaluating the ego's actions and thoughts.

    - Why do you feel anger, anxiety, and nervousness?
    - Our job as counsellors is to dig a little bit deeper into these topics.
    - We need to understand the truth behind their feelings.

- Unconscious Mind: Fears, Motives, Sexual Desires, Needs, Shameful Experiences.
    - Are you good enough?
    - When self-restraint is not practiced, these traits take over a person's character.
    - We are not in control of our desires and feelings, but we are in control of our perspectives and actions.
    - Self-control is a sign of maturity.

Defence Mechanisms
Sigmund Freud

"The most important element of good communication is to listen to what isn't being said"
- Peter Drucker (Discernment)

- A defensive person is driven by insecurity.
- It is hard to connect with people who have tons of defence mechanisms.

1. Projection: The mental process by which people attribute to others what is in their minds.
    a. Thinking people are judging us because we judge others.
    b. If I do this, everyone else must be doing it too.

2. Introjection: Copying others' attributes and actions unknowingly.
    a. They imitate a boss who made them feel inferior.

3. Denial: People deny taking responsibility for their actions. They redirect everything to external reasons.
    a. Denying that we played a part in the problem.

4. Regression: Behaving like our previous selves (child selves, it is our comfort zone). Also can be termed as comfort habits.
    a. Chewing fingernails out of habit.

5. Displacement: Taking out piled-up anger on someone or something else.
    a. Being unable to argue with the boss at the office, so take it out on family members using rude remarks and actions.

6. Sublimation: It is similar to displacement, but instead of putting our emotions out on something destructive, we put them out on something constructive.
    a. Painting a picture after a hard day.
    b. Playing music when stressed.

7. Blocking: Being a closed book and stonewalling a conversation.
    a. Just claiming that "I can't remember" instead of trying to dig deeper and remembering.
    b. Comes from distrust.

8. Humour: Anytime we have conversations about our insecurities, we make a joke out of it to avoid the feeling and cover up our real emotions.
    a. Comes from distrust, but clients are open to sharing if they can figure out we are trustworthy.
    b. We should acknowledge that it is a heavy topic and be surprised by their humorous reaction.

9. Acting Out: Emotional outbursts.
    a. Could be anger, fear, anxiety, tears etc.

10. Dissociation: Separate oneself from experiencing reality.
    a. Dozing off while walking on the road.
    b. Daydreaming,
    c. It's like putting our brain to airplane mode.

11. Intellectualisation: Avoiding emotional reflection.
    a. They learned that to feel is to hurt.
    b. They rationalize everything instead of feeling the emotion.
    c. Thinking and reflection is used to avoid feelings.

12. Avoidance: Exiting an event to escape from confrontation.
    a. They fear dealing with emotional situations.

13. Compensation: It is a coping mechanism where people overachieve in one area to make it up for failures in other areas.
    a. They feel insignificant for failing, hence they push themselves to overachieve and have a sense of importance through that.

14. Affiliation: It means to connect an experience from the past with events of the present.
    a. Being unable to trust people in the present because of being hurt in the past.
    b. Through affiliation, human beings tend to set expectations of current events due to the results of past events.

15. Reality Anxiety: This is the fear of real dangers or threats in the external world
    a. Death, dog bite, etc.
16. Neurotic Anxiety: This is the fear of losing control over the id's impulses, which may violate the superego's moral standards.

17. Moral Anxiety: This is the guilt or shame that comes from violating or being tempted to violate the superego's rules.

Roadblocks to Listening

List of things that get in our way while building counselling relationships.

- Ordering & Commanding:
    - Similar to the concept of “Mother knows best”.
    - Thinking that we know best and our clients should do as we think.
    - While ordering, we are making a statement saying we know better than they do. (Might make them feel stupid)
    - Instead of ordering, we should suggest.
    - It is not empowering for the other person.
    - Seems arrogant and forceful.
    - A person doesn't need orders, they need space to figure it out on their own.
    - We should allow clients to draw their own conclusions instead of handing it over to them.

- Warning & Threatening:
    - We shouldn’t speak in a condescending tone.

- Moralising & Preaching:
    - Feeling like we have a moral superiority because of our achievements. (having counselling degrees and knowledge)
    - Entering the role of a teacher is not the job of a counsellor.
    - We must acknowledge that we all have flaws and be humble despite our knowledge and understanding of the world.
    - If someone is walking into a ditch deliberately, we can’t force them to not walk down that path, rather, we can ask questions to be more aware of what they are doing and why they are doing it.

- Advising & Giving Solutions:
    - Counselling psychology is not about giving solutions.
    - Giving advice is often belittling to the other person.
    - We have to understand that we haven’t experienced life the way our clients have experienced life.
    - We are all different.
    - Thinking that the advice that worked for us is going to work for everyone else is not right.

- Giving Logical Arguments:
    - People are not seeking to be diagnosed in counselling.
    - We must acknowledge that human beings experience life in 5 ways. Rationalism is only 1 of the 5 ways.

- Judging & Disagreeing:
    - We must acknowledge that a person has an inner reality, such as emotions.
    - We should not judge them based on how we experience a situation.
    - Disagreeing with an emotion doesn't bring about any change.
    - Understanding where the emotion is coming from helps us manage our emotions better.

- Praise & Agreeing with everything:
    - Clients can get addicted to praise.
    - Being addicted to praise can make a person depend too much on external validation rather than internal validation.
    - We have to be balanced about this approach.
    - If a client has praise-seeking behaviours, we should ask questions to find out why they have these tendencies.

- Intellectualism & Labelism:
    - We have to be unbiased with people who are diagnosed with certain mental health issues.
    - If a client has been diagnosed with depression, they might label themselves as a depressed person, which will make them think as if they can never come out of depression.
    - We should work with them to come out of this limiting belief.
    - We should help them understand that "depression" is curable only if they don't label themselves as "a depressed person". It is temporary, not permanent.
- Sympathizing & Consoling:
    - We should help clients to mature their thinking.
    - Sympathizing can stroke a person's ego.

- Probing & Interrogating:
    - Making our clients feel like we are just following a script is not going to help us build trust.
    - Don't interrogate like a policeman, talk like a friend.

- Withdrawing & Diverting:
    - We should learn how not to doze off.
    - Having something in our mind while talking with a client comes off as insensitive.

    - For example, looking at the clock over and over again.
    - Always keep the client as the priority.

LCB Model for Understanding People
By Larry Crabb

5 different ways of experiencing life.

- 1st Layer, Physical:
    - When we are hurt physically, we go to the hospital.
    - Physical problems: Concussion, Diseases, Disorders, etc.
    - Counsellors can not help with physical issues.
    - We need to be careful about not labelling people as a professional counsellor.
    - If we label people, it might break people who have lower self-esteem.

- 2nd Layer, Emotional:
    - How do we feel the impact of our beliefs is our emotional experience.
    - If someone believes that they need to be perfect to be loved, then they might always feel like they are undeserving of love, which might push them to feel feelings of hurt and pain.
    - When people are hurt emotionally, people go to therapy or counselling.
    - People know they have problems when they feel “bad”.
    - Example: Scared, Anxiety, Nervousness, etc.
    - Emotions are not illnesses in conventional psychology.
    - We want to help people set boundaries in their lives.
    - When people are unaware of their actions, they fall off a cliff
    - Boundaries help us build barriers around the cliff.
    - We have to look within ourselves foremost.
    - People are not addicted to a particular substance, rather, they become addicted to the instant gratification that it gives them.
    - Instant gratification gives a temporary boost to low self-esteem.

- 3rd Layer, Rational:
    - Thoughts, beliefs, and interpretations about ourselves, God, others, and the world.

    - Rational experience is all about our inner belief system.
    - Labelling oneself as “addicted”, “worthless”, “incapable” etc. gives our brain a reason to confirm why we are this way (Confirmation bias).
    - You must examine and correct false beliefs.

- 4th Layer, Volitional:
    - Our ability to make decisions in Volitional experience.
    - The choices we make in response to our thoughts and feelings.
    - Improving Volitionally means we have to acknowledge that we do have a choice.
    - Some people think they “have to” do something based on their feelings and thoughts. However, in reality, it is possible for them to choose something else.
    - This is true freedom, our free will.

- 5th Layer, Spiritual:
    - Our spirit drives us.
    - What is the point of leading a moral life?
    - Why do we have to be “good people”?
    - Who determines what is “good”?
    - No one changes until they have a meaningful reason for changing.
    - Centre of identity, purpose, and healing.
    - We need to understand what motivates us to be “good”.
    - Many counsellors help people to “feel good”, but genuine counselling is driving people to discover deeper knowledge about themselves.
    - Who we make the central part of our life directly affects our spirit.
    - Options to make a central part of our lives: God, Society, Family, Spouse, Friends, Ourselves(Ego), etc. The choice is ours.
    - Our core identity “Being a good human”, “Being a soldier”, “Being an athlete”, “Being a parent”, etc.
    - Quitting the job that gives us our identity ends up making us feel lost.
    - People who have an internal void use this as motivation to fill the gap with materialistic things such as food, wealth, relationships, etc.
    - Rather than allowing people to label who we are, we should try to derive who we are from within and then set ourselves off on a path to pursue that label.
    - Ask, what does healing look like to our client?

Exercise: Difference between Death and Life

- What makes you feel dead inside?
- You're alive but not living.
- "I feel dead inside when I…" (fail, comparison, physically out of shape, etc)
- This is the enemy, this is what we try to address and unpack.
- It helps make our client feel aware of what they don't want.

- What makes you feel fulfilled?
- "To experience life at its fullest, I must have…" (loving friends and family, adventures, travelling, confidence, etc.)
- We try to work towards achieving it.

Exercise: LCB Model

How do you experience the "Death"

- 1st Layer, Physically
    - If someone feels dead inside, they can experience certain symptoms.
    - Example: overeating, pain in the chest, etc.

- 2nd Layer, Emotional
    - Example: Anxiousness, Nervousness, Frustration, Anger, Sadness.

- 3rd Layer, Rational
    - Example: believing that we have failed, believing that we are worse, etc.
    - There are usually 2 voices in our head: The Voice of Doubt and The Voice of Reason.

    - Voice of doubt holds us back..
    - The voice of reason wants to push us to deal with the problem.

- 4th Layer, Volitional
    - Some people choose to self-destruct, fall into despair, disconnect, and punish other people.
    - Some people choose to self-develop and deal with the issue.
    - Choosing the first choice gives instant gratification but has negative long-term repercussions.
    - Choosing the second choice is more difficult in the present, but it gives us overall relief and satisfaction in life.

- 5th Layer, Spiritual
    - What drives you to make the choices and feel things in life?
    - Some people want to please society, some people want to avoid death, and some people want to keep their good image to themselves.

Summary of LCB Model

- Consequences: What's happening in our lives? Positive and Negative situations. (Consequences are the results of our behaviours.)

- Behaviours: Helpful and Unhelpful Behaviours to fix the consequence. Behaviours are built in through past experiences and choices. (the actions we take regularly)

- Choice: Our choices make our behaviours. We are always in control of our choices. (The actions we make by our free will)

- Beliefs: Empowering beliefs and Disempowering beliefs. People think beliefs are truths; however, belief is simply belief. (Our thoughts about ourselves and the world)

    - Limiting beliefs: This causes our lives to be limited and out of control.
    - Positive beliefs: This causes our lives to have more opportunities and control.

- Driving Force: Core values. This is a given. Most people are unaware of their core values.

    - Security: Feeling safe with our identity.
        - Feeling secure based on our external reality takes control away from us. For Example: Job, Money, etc.
        - Feeling secure based on inner qualities gives us power. For Example: Being Kind, Being Strong, Being Knowledgeable, etc.

    - Significance: Being an important member of society. Being respected. We want people to find value in us.

    - Self-Worth: Understanding what we can give to ourselves and other people. Self-worth is tied to security and significance. The more value we have as human beings, the more we can give to ourselves and the people around us.

Theories of Counselling & Schools of Thought

The purpose of all types of counselling is to help a person live a life with wholeness.

The Philosophy of Dialogue
By Martin Buber

All human interactions fall into either of these 2 categories:

- Unpersonified:
    - Seeking symptoms.
    - Putting labels on people.
    - Positioning oneself as the higher authority.
    - It's a Monologue.
    - For example: A lecture.

- Relational Dialogue:
    - Knowing the person.
    - I do not have an agenda.
    - I don't want to put you in a box.
    - Positioning both as equals.
    - It's a Dialogue.
    - For example: A conversation.

Humanistic School
By Carl Rogers

6 Conditions for therapeutic change:

1. Two people are meaningfully engaged.
    - We can't have other thoughts in our minds.
    - We have to completely focus on the other person.
    - We have to keep our personal life aside and give our all to the client.

2. The client is willing to expose vulnerability.
    - Being able to openly talk about past experiences.
    - The counsellor should try to win the trust of their clients.
    - The counsellor must respect the other person's vulnerability.

3. The helper is congruent & integrated in the connection.
    - Being genuine and authentic.

    - Being attuned and involved.

4. The helper has unconditional positive regard for the client.
    - Accept, respect, and value the clients no matter what.

5. The helper can empathise with the client's "FOR".
    - The Frame of Reference is the unique lens through which a client views the world.
    - Step into the client's shoes to truly understand their thoughts and feelings from their perspective.

6. The helper relates the client FOR & UPR conversation.
    - Offering Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) – fully accepting the client without judgment, no matter what the client says, feels, or does.
    - We should understand how they feel and where they're coming from (FOR), and I still accept them completely as they are (UPR).

Humanistic School
By Abraham Maslow

The needs of human beings to survive:

- Physiological Needs:
    - Food, Shelter, Air, Water, Clothing, Sleep, etc.

- Security: We seek safety and stability in our environment
    - protection from violence or harm
    - stable income or resources
    - knowing your source of income is safe

- Social: Humans crave connection and relationships.
    - Family Bonding
    - Friendships
    - Feeling Accepted in a group or Community

    - Wanting to share

- Ego: How we see ourselves and how others see us.
    - Feeling confident and capable.
    - Being appreciated, praised, or respected.
    - Having a meaningful role in society.
    - Striving for the top spot.

- Self-Actualization: Becoming the best version of oneself.
    - Learning new things, developing talents.
    - Expressing yourself through art, writing, music, and design.
    - Moments of joy, inspiration, or deep connection.
    - No longer motivated by the ego.
    - Who am I? What is my purpose? What legacy do I want to leave behind?
    - Living for a cause greater than us. Serving God, Serving People, Serving Family.
    - Focusing less on gaining and more on giving.

Psychoanalytical School
By Eric Berne

Transactional Analysis (How our past information and experiences affect our present)

- We initially learn from our parents and siblings.
    - We are more like our parents by default than we like to be.
    - Immature parents: Control, manipulation, fear, etc.
    - Mature parents: Unconditional love, listening, etc.
    - Some people want things for people that we might not have received in our childhood.
    - Some people want to inflict similar pain on other people.

- Child Adults:
    - We follow our childlike qualities.

    - For example: Throwing tantrums, shouting, screaming, being obnoxious, stubborn, withdrawing, running away, etc.
    - Maturity is not determined by a person's age but by the willingness to take full responsibility for their lives.

- Mature Adults:
    - Driven by logic and evidence.
    - For example: Calm, secure, non-reactive, independent, etc.

- Transference: The clients transfer onto us the expectations or the traits of someone they have experienced earlier in life.
    - How our parents relate to us and how we relate to our parents.
    - If we talk to people who talk like our parents, then we tend to resort back to how we used to deal with our parents as a child.
    - For example, if we were used to throwing tantrums against our parents while disagreeing, then we also throw tantrums against other people in disagreements.

- Counter-Transference: When the counsellor projects their unresolved feelings onto client (Same as Transference but vice versa.)
- Parallel Process: When the counsellor starts relating to the clients so much that they fall out of congruence and start thinking more about their own story.
    - It happens if we haven't made peace with our past through acceptance and kindness to ourselves.
    - It's important to forgive the people who have wronged us in our past, thinking that they are imperfect.
    - It's important to forgive ourselves for the mistakes we have committed in our past, because we are also imperfect.

Phenomenology

- Train Journeys:
    - Everyone is on their train journey.
    - We should acknowledge that we are unaware of what happened in their journey of the past while meeting someone on a train.

    - Counselling helps people to understand and make sense of what happened in their past, why it happened, why they are the way they are, and where they are going.

- Bee Stings:
    - Small but intensely painful.
    - Some emotional wounds seem minor from the outside but hurt deeply inside.

- Incomplete Maps:
    - An incomplete map is a mental or emotional model of the world that a person creates based on their experiences, upbringing, and beliefs.
    - But like any map, it's not always 100% accurate or complete.
    - As we learn more, we can fill out the map with real information instead of predicted information.

Achology: The Cycle of Change

Pre-Contemplation:

a. The client might be in denial or unaware of their internal issues.
b. Counsellors sow seeds of awareness with wisdom and gentleness without pushing.

Contemplation:

c. The client starts to realize they might have some issues.
d. Clients are not sure if they want to change their current issue.
e. They assess their pros and cons.
f. Counsellors help them to understand the pros and cons better.
g. We leave the decisions to them.

Preparation:

h. The client starts to prepare for change.

i. They might start setting goals.
j. Help to encourage the client in their self-help decision.
k. Address the fear, support their planning.

Action:

l. The client starts taking practical steps through physical actions.
m. Examples include going to the gym, reading books, having healthy eating habits, going for a jog, staying away from addictive substances, etc.
n. Counsellors can hold the client accountable, ask about their progress, etc.
o.

Maintenance:

p. The client works hard to maintain their new habit.
q. Counsellors remind them of the benefits of the new habits and behaviours.

Relapse:

r. Clients may turn back to their old habits.
s. Counsellors should tell them that it's a slip, not a failure.
t. Mistakes happen in life, but they should not discourage us from keeping moving forward and trying.
u. The fact that the client did it before means they can do it again.
v. Explain that change is not linear. There are ups and downs.

General Awareness

Dependency is when a person relies heavily on someone else to meet their emotional, psychological, or physical needs.

- Healthy Dependency:
  - We all need others—it's natural.
  - Healthy dependency includes mutual support, trust, and emotional connection.
- Unhealthy Dependency:
  - Being unable to function properly without the other person.
  - They lose their sense of self and identity without the other person.

Codependency is an unhealthy relationship pattern characterized by a "giver" who neglects their well-being to meet the needs of a "taker." This dynamic involves one person sacrificing their needs for the other.

- The giver always has to give to feel safe.
- The taker needs to take to feel satisfied.

Ontology: The Source of Human Identity

The branch of philosophy that deals with the question of existence itself

- Thought: The spark. Random or conscious mental activity.
- Feelings: Emotions are attached to our thoughts.
- Beliefs: Repeated thoughts and feelings that we accept as true.
- Opinions: Subjective conclusions formed from beliefs.
- Facts/Truth: Ideally, truth is objective. However, we often confuse our opinions with truth unless they are challenged.

- What we do: Tasks, jobs, responsibilities.
- How we feel: Emotional states in response to life.
- How we behave: Patterns we act out (defensive, nurturing, avoidant, etc.).
- Who we are: Our self-concept or “way of being”.

Life-Giving Vision

- Grounded in love, acceptance, possibility, and growth.
- Fosters identity development.
- Facilitates meaningful connection and action.

Life-Taking Vision

- Rooted in fear, lack, shame, or limitation.
- Keeps us stuck in survival mode or unhealthy patterns.
- Undermines our sense of self.

Behaviorism

Cause (Trigger) → Behaviour (Action) → Effect (Outcome)

- Cause: This is the event, situation, or internal feeling that starts the chain reaction
    - External: someone criticizes you, a loud noise, a text message.
    - Internal: a memory, a thought, a feeling, like anxiety or hunger.
- Behavior: This is an action that the person takes after the trigger. Behaviour is a choice.
    - Visible: Shouting, disassociating, running, etc.
    - Invisible: Overthinking, shutting down emotionally, etc.
- Effect: This is what happens because of the behavior.
    - Losing a relationship.
    - Loss of time.

Conditioning is the process through which human behavior is learned, understood, predicted, and ultimately changed.

- Behavior is learned through interaction with the environment.
    - We develop our actions and reactions based on what we experience and learn.
- Internal thoughts/feelings are not the focus.
    - Behaviorist theory posits that only observable and measurable phenomena are considered valid data.
- All behavior has a cause.
    - It's not random — it's shaped by what happens before and after the behavior.

- Associative learning:
    - It’s how we learn through experience — by noticing patterns and linking things together over time.
    - Classical Conditioning:
        - Learning to associate two stimuli so that one predicts the other.
    - Operant Conditioning:
        - Learning to associate a behavior with its consequence.
        - Positive reinforcement: Barking = Get Food = Bark more
        - Negative reinforcement: Barking = Not get shocked = Bark more

Cognitive Behavioral

1. How did you decide to become a helper?

Answer: Since I had a lack of help during my early life. For example: Not having friends, being weak physically, etc.

2. Why do you want to be a helper?

Answer: I decided that if I can help other people not feel this way or help them come out of these situations in life, then my life would be more purposeful.

3. What emotions are you comfortable with?

Answer: I am comfortable feeling angry. I think I can manage it well. I get angry quite easily. But I think people don't know about it because of how well I control it.

4. What emotions in you or others are you not okay with?

Answer: For me, if I get frustrated or anxious, then I have a tendency to overthink and make a situation worse in my head than it already is. I don’t like that.

5. What are your expectations of clients?

Answer: I hope people will come to me to make real change in their lives, and I hope to help them with that.

6. How will you manage client responses towards you?

Answer: I don't take things personally. I know people don’t understand who I am, and people judge and assume too quickly. If someone poses a negative response towards me, I usually deal with it with understanding. It doesn't affect me. I know myself better than other people.

7. How will you manage your feelings towards clients?

Answer: I don’t live my life based on feelings. I understand that feelings are not in my control, but my actions are. I will always deal with my clients professionally, no matter how I feel.

8. To what degree can you be flexible with our rules?

Answer: Maybe with how much time I am giving.

Thoughts Are Not Facts

1. Is this true?

2. Is this always true?

3. How does that thought make you feel?

4. How much better would life be without this thought or belief?

Thomas Harris Life Positions Theory

Life Positions	What It Means	Common Behaviours
I'm OK, You're OK	Healthy self-esteem and respecting others	Open, Trusting, Assertive, Expressive
I'm OK, You're Not OK	Arrogant, Dismissive	Controlling, Critical, Manipulative
I'm Not OK, You're OK	Sees others as better	Passive, Dependent, Seeks validation from others
I'm Not OK, You're Not OK	Hopelessness, Absence of trust in themselves and others	Depressed

We may shift between these positions in different relationships or situations, but one usually becomes our default mindset.

The Cognitive Experience

- Cognitive refers to anything related to thinking, understanding, learning, remembering, and processing information. It's all about how your mind works.
    - Think
    - Learn
    - Remember
    - Solve Problems
    - Pay Attention

- Our life experiences are internalized, mentally processed, and subsequently influence our actions.

- Mental process:

Focusing on the positive increases positive emotions.

Focusing on the negative increases negative emotions.

Thoughts create feelings, feelings lead to actions, actions produce result, result makes us have thoughts.

We should understand that people who have destructive patterns have a struggling past. A lot of them want to get out of it but their behaviour is currently defeating them.

A lot of them don't realise that they DO have a choice to not give in to their feelings.

We DO have a choice to divert our thinking

We DO have a choice of not making a decision based solely on a feeling.

ABCs of Cognitive Interpretation

A → Activating Event
B → Beliefs
C → Consequential Event
D → Disputation of Belief
E → Effect of new Belief

Cognitive Distortions

- Catastrophizing
    - Always thinking that the worst-case scenario is going to take place.
    - If I mess up my presentation, I might fail the class.
    - Panic and Anxiety

- Overgeneralizing
    - Thinking that an outcome will occur every time because it has happened a few times before.

    - Giving up on relationships because one friend betrayed us.

- Magical Thinking
    - Thinking a fortune teller will tell our future, so we stop taking accountability.
    - Or thinking God will fix our lives without us having to put any effort.

- Making Assumptions
    - Thinking that an outcome will take place with very little evidence.
    - Someone didn't text me, so they must hate me.

- Emotional Reasoning
    - Thinking something to be true because of feeling strong emotions.
    - My chest is feeling heavy, so something bad is about to happen.

- Rule Keeping & "Should" Statements
    - Assigning rules to the external world.
    - Feeling of entitlement.
    - People should treat me a certain way.

Pre-neurotic to Neurotic

- Pre-neurotic
    - Pre-neurotic is the state when we are continuously pursuing a goal in life.
    - Goals: Freedom, Security, Self-worth, Health, etc.
    - When something gets in the way, we feel anger, frustration, fear etc.

- Neurotic
    - Neurotic is the state we are at when we stop chasing our goals.
    - When we give up, we feel sadness, depression, hopelessness, etc.

Counselling Stages

- Exploration:
    - Understanding the client.

    - Learning about their experiences.
    - Asking open-ended questions and being open to mental discoveries.
    - Trust building
- Perspective Broadening:
    - Challenging the views that our clients hold.
    - Making them aware of other options.
    - Exploring how the other choices might affect them in the future.
    - Encouraging self-compassion, resilience.
    - Debunking their limiting beliefs.
- Moving into Action:
    - Focus on future goals.
    - Drawing out plans.
    - Understanding the willingness of our clients.
    - Giving credit and validating their small steps towards self-development.
    - Helping them build a plan.
    - For example: Journaling, Dieting, Hitting the gym, etc.
    - Reflection exercises.

1. Pre-contemplation
2. Establishment of contact
3. Imagining the relationship
4. Client and Counsellor meet
5. Client gains clarity and focus
6. Other problems might arise
7. Exploring possible solutions
8. Apprehension about change
9. Adapt, adjust, and achieve
10. Relationship ends

Relationship Building

- Attending Skills:
    - Being natural while speaking.
    - Nodding
    - Eye contact

    - Open body posture
    - Relaxed look
    - Getting rid of distractions
    - Appropriate silence

- Active Listening:
    - Genuinely listening with a caring ear.
    - Asking questions.
    - Reflecting on what we hear.
    - Acknowledging their emotions.
    - These qualities naturally come up when we truly care about our clients.

- Empathy:
    - Understanding their perspective from their perspective.
    - Putting ourselves in their shoes.
    - Coming from a place of understanding, not judgement.
    - Not providing criticism.

- Questions:
    - Open-ended questions:
        - Explanation questions
        - How is it making you feel?
        - What did you think about that decision?
        - Why did you make that decision?

    - Closed questions:
        - Usually, yes or no
        - Did you enjoy doing that?
        - Was that the first time it happened?

- Summarising:
    - Putting everything together and explaining to our client from our viewpoint.
    - Organizing dispersed thoughts.

Counselling Rules

1. We are not trying to judge other people's actions, we are trying to understand their actions and help them better understand themselves.

2. Genuinely caring about a client's well-being is the key to counseling psychology.

3. As counselors, we must understand ourselves better first.

4. Don't encourage emotional people to become more rational and vice versa.

5. We encourage them to be more empathic.

6. Help them understand their thinking patterns and come to terms with them.

7. A problem only exists in our lives until we take responsibility for it and deal with it.
    a. Find the source of the problem and find a solution to solve it.

8. Create an environment safe enough for clients to express their thoughts, past experiences, and unpack them.

9. Don't feel the pressure of fixing people; rather, create an environment to allow people to be more aware of themselves.

10. Focus on people's self-concept (Who they want to become in the future).

11. Respect and understand the client's values and morals.

12. Counselling is not advice giving, it's exploration for better understanding.

13. We try to draw the answers out of our clients instead of handing it over to them.

14. We counsel with people, not to people.

Counselling Questions to Ask Clients

Initial Questions:

1. What brings you in today?
2. Have you ever tried counseling before?
3. What would you like to achieve from our sessions together?
4. Can you tell me a bit about yourself—your background, family, daily life?

Exploration of the current situation:

1. When did you first notice this issue?
2. In what ways does this issue impact your daily routine?
3. What could be the lasting effects of this?
4. Please rate the intensity of this issue on a scale of 1 to 10.
5. How do you think this aligns with your values?
6. What are you hoping this choice will bring you?
7. Have you noticed any patterns that might be repeating?

Exploration of emotions:

1. How does this situation make you feel?
2. What thoughts usually go through your mind when this happens?
3. Are there certain triggers that make things worse?

Exploration of Past Experiences:

1. Has something like this happened before in your life?
2. How was this kind of issue handled in your family growing up?

3. What role did you typically play in your family?

4. Are there any past experiences that may be connected to what you're feeling now?

Identifying Strengths:

1. What has helped you get through difficult times in the past?

2. What are some personal strengths you're aware of?

3. Who do you feel most supported by?

4. What activities make you feel calm or more like yourself?

Future Goals:

1. If things got better, what would be different in your life?

2. What small change could you make this week that might help?

3. What are you hoping to learn about yourself during this process?

Session Reflection:

1. What stood out most to you during our session today?

2. Is there something you'd like to explore further next time?

3. How are you feeling now compared to when we started?

4. Do you have any questions or concerns before we end today?

References

1. Udemy Course (*Counselling Skills Certificate Course (Beginner to Advanced*). Instructor: Kain Ramsay. Achology Director of Training, Author, and Community Builder